

**NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of the Commission Meeting**  
held on  
**March 26, 2026**  
**6:00 p.m. - Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Johnson, Chair, called the meeting to order.

**PRESENT:** Mr. H. Johnson, Town of Christiansburg, Chair; Ms. S. Anderson, Town of Blacksburg, Vice-Chair; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Mr. C.B. Andrews, Town of Pembroke; Dr. R. Brandon, New River Community College; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Mr. B. Dawson, Town of Pulaski; Ms. A. Davis, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. A. Graftsky, Montgomery County; Mr. M. Harvey; Town of Blacksburg; Ms. T. Hockett, Town of Christiansburg; Dr. A. Joyner, Radford University; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Mr. M. Mann, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County; Ms. L. Morris, Virginia Tech; Mr. W. Seagle, Town of Dublin;; Mr. T. Spangler, Town of Narrows; and Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County

**ABSENT:** Mr. W. Griffin, Town of Floyd; Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford; Mr. P. Martin, Giles County; Ms. L. Ramsey; Pulaski County; Mr. J. Reeves, Pulaski County; and Mr. B. Wheeler, Montgomery County.

Staff Attendees: Jessica Barrett, Kevin Byrd, Kelly Patton, Julie Phillips, Leo Priddy, and Emily Warren.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Approval of Minutes for February**

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Mr. McCoy moved for the approval of the minutes. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; one abstention, Mr. Harvey.

**B. Approval of Treasurer's Reports for February**

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved for approval of the Treasurer's Reports. Mr. Maslaney seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried.

**III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS**

**A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)**

None

B. Regular Project Review  
None

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS  
None

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Johnson reported the Livability in Action Exchange took place on March 25<sup>th</sup> and was well attended.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Regional Commission agenda packet. The AM2 Tech Hub statewide competitive GO Virginia grant was approved by the state board. An application to the US Economic Development Administration was submitted on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority submitted a request for Congressionally Directed Spending to support construction costs for the project. Staff also met with Virginia program staff for the Appalachian Regional Commission to discuss a grant application for construction assistance that is due April 30<sup>th</sup>.

The NRV Livability In Action Exchange was held March 25<sup>th</sup> in the morning at the German Club in Blacksburg. Dr. Tamarah Holmes, the new director for the VA Dept of Housing and Community Development, was in attendance and provided closing remarks.

The Regional Commission continues to support communities impacted by Hurricane Helene. The Virginia Disaster Assistance Fund (VDAF) program is open for applications. Information about the program is on our website.

The new office construction project kicked-off on 3/12. Interior demolition is well underway as well as exterior excavation of utilities. The construction timeline is anticipated to last nine months with office relocation hopefully to take place at the end of 2026.

VII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Harvey reported that the Lyric Theater in Blacksburg recently completed renovations in the theater area and will continue renovations in the lobby. There are partial road closures around town as Shentel installs conduit for fiber.

Mr. Horton reported that the City of Radford is holding a rededication ceremony for its dog park with repairs complete following damage sustained from Hurricane Helene. An Easter egg hunt will be held in Bissett park on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Spangler reported that the Town of Narrows will hold its annual Kids Fishing Day event on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Mann reported that the Town of Rich Creek will hold its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on April 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Graftsky reported that Sheriff Hank Partin will retire at the end of March and a special election will be held in November to fill the position.

Mr. Spangler reported that the Town of Narrows town manager, Terry Nicholson, will retire in September.

## **VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. New River Valley Agency on Aging Overview**

Ray Parks, executive director of the New River Valley Agency on Aging, provided a presentation on the work of the agency in the region. It is well documented that older adults occupy an increasing share of the overall population, and the need for supportive services is increasing accordingly. The New River Valley Agency on Aging leverages Older Americans Act state and federal resources with local contributions to activate the region's Area Plan for Aging Services within PDC 4. This plan, once approved by the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, results in a contract for the agency to carry out the work promoting maximum independence and community connections for older adults who are aging in place in our region. The agency has a 50-year history serving as a primary source of information, supportive community and home-based services, and advocacy for individuals age 60 and older, as well as their caregivers.

### **B. NRVRC Economic Development Program Update**

Mr. Priddy explained each year, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides support to the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC) to advance economic development initiatives across the region. This funding allows the NRVRC to support long-term planning, respond to local needs, and advance projects that strengthen the regional economy. This update is intended to provide an overview of current economic conditions in the region, along with updates on the economic development program, the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), and the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). It is also meant to reflect the economy in the region in real time. Through ongoing coordination with local governments, developers, employers, and regional partners, the NRVRC is able to stay closely connected to evolving conditions in the New River Valley.

The Regional Commission is responsible for preparing and maintaining the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), also known as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). This planning document informs economic development activities in the region by analyzing economic trends, setting goals and objectives, and identifying priority projects submitted by local governments.

Mr. Priddy explained that the current terms for RLF customers do not align with traditional financing. The RLF committee has recommended changing the terms for new clients to any late payment over 30 days will be charged a 5% late fee.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved to approve the change in terms to 30 days late will be charged a 5 % fee. Mr. Horton seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. FY25 Audit

Mr. Byrd provided an overview of the FY 25 Audit Report. The report did not include any findings or deficiencies. He thanked the finance team for their hard work throughout the year, which helps to ensure a smooth and successful audit process.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to accept the FY25 Audit Report. Ms. Hockett seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Johnson called to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 pm.

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H. Johnson, Chair  
New River Valley Regional Commission